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THE

PARADISE OF FOOLS,

OR THE

WONDERFUL ADVENTURES

OF

BEELZEBUB BUBBLE,

A SATIRE ON SOMEBODY,

BY NATHAN NOBODY;

WITH

A CRITIQUE,

BY SIMON SNAPPINGTURTLE, ESQ.

The sports of winds! all these, up-whirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after; now unpeopled and untrod.—*Milton.*

Fenum habet in cornu, longe fuge.
Run! run! he'll poke!—there's hay upon his horns.—*Horace.*

BALTIMORE:
N. HICKMAN, 86, BALTIMORE STREET.
1841.

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A CRITIQUE

ON

THE PARADISE OF FOOLS;

BY SIMON SNAPPINGTURTLE.

The verses of this young man (for he tells us he is only three and twenty) are of a nature to call for the severest strictures of the press. He entitles his poem "The Paradise of Fools," and surely no one was ever better fitted for describing such a place than himself. If we may judge from the plan and execution of the work, he must not only have been an eye-witness of what he describes, but must have had daily intercourse with the beings whom he represents as denizens of that place, until he acquired their manner and tone of thinking to perfection. He must have inhaled the Bœotian air of those regions until he fully imbibed the spirit of dullness, which he now pours out so lavishly in this most stupid and abominable

work. And, should he revisit the blissful seats of "Paradise," he has only to present it as his passport, and he is sure of instant admission.

The poem is not only exceedingly dull, but cannot even make the least pretensions to originality. True it is that the plot and the sentiments are the author's own, and resemble those of no other work with which we are acquainted. But then it is written in the octave, Italian measure of Don Juan, and is not that alone enough to brand it as a base and servile imitation? It is not sufficient, at the present day, that a poet be bold, and vigorous, and original in thought and conception; he must be original in the texture of his verse—nay! I question if he should not be original in the very adoption of his language. He should not tamely and servilely use the vulgar *thees* and *thous*, and *ands*, &c. &c., which have been so often used before, but should substitute a diction altogether his own. And, tried by this standard, how few of our more modern bards stand a chance of immortality! Walter Scott, with all his brilliant, and vivid, and life-like imagery and description, dwindles down into the slavish imitator, for Milton wrote in the octo-syllabic verse long before his day. Byron wrote Childe Harold, but, alas! Spenser used the stanza before! Even his Don Juan, thought by some to be altogether his own, has not the least claims to originality. The measure in which

it is composed was adopted in Italy centuries ago, and Gay and Whistlecraft first gave it an English dress. Yes, Byron himself, with all his unmerited fame, is a vile plagiarist, destined soon to be forgotten; and, of modern English poets, Robert Southey alone has established any just claims to originality, by writing long and laboured poems in a style and stanza unheard of before. Verse was once looked upon as only the medium through which the poet conveyed his thoughts to the minds of others. But that was the mistake of a barbarous age. It is the all-important thing. It was once like the sword upon the field of strife; when dropped by one combatant, another might catch it up, nor be thought the worse warrior because the other had wielded it before. The vigour of the blows dealt with it was the only thing considered. But now every man must use his own weapon, or be contented to lose his reputation forever.

Such are the canons of criticism, deduced from the immutable laws of nature and common sense, and lately established by us autocrats of the quill. They are as infallible as the decrees of the Vatican. And, tried by these rules, this young gentleman's verses must meet with the most unqualified condemnation.

But there are stronger objections to the poem than these. Its morality is of the most shocking character. Without more than barely adverting to the profanity of

christening his hero after a being entitled to our highest respect and veneration; without quoting passages in which the name of his Satanic Majesty is used in the lightest and most irreverent terms; without stopping to show how his characters are made to speak blasphemy almost as horrid as any in Milton, I would just point out the manner in which he stigmatizes the reverend Parson Bubble. In the grave strain of irony, with which he endeavours to satirize a certain class, I see an insidious and dangerous attack upon religion itself. The parson, it is true, is a hypocrite; but hypocrites should always be sacred from the rude hand of satire. The prodigal, the miser, the man of ambition, the libertine, are all confessedly fit subjects for the satirist, for they have only the weaknesses of poor human nature to plead in extenuation. But not so with the hypocrite; and therefore he should be sacred and untouched. The former, most generally, only injure the temporal happiness of others, and oftener of themselves; but the hypocrite sends hundreds of souls to perdition, and is therefore perfectly harmless, and should be suffered to move about without molestation.

But another objection to the poem is the very hostile spirit which it exhibits towards a number of unfortunate authors, forsaken by the Muses, and kicking and floundering in the slough of Dullness and Despondency. Had the satirist been instigated by some private pique, or petty

spite, there might have been some shadow of excuse; but there is none such whatever. On the contrary, we learn that this young man has not a single personal acquaintance among the literary men of the day; that he has always lived in obscurity, and consequently can have no cause of malice against any one. He has then been guilty of a most wanton, and cold-blooded, and unprovoked attack upon men whose only offence is that of having disgraced the national literature, for a number of years, with impunity, and who have, as it were, acquired a kind of prescriptive right to scribble and act as absurdly as they please.

We cannot conveniently examine, in detail, the injustice of his many attacks, but shall only instance that made upon the venerable gentleman with whom he commences. He should have had more respect to his years.* When a young man, without the lights of experience and the wisdom which age alone can bestow, and with the hot, fiery, and impetuous passions of youth living and glowing within him, is hurried on into some trifling absurdity, he should be severely censured by every one. But not so with the man of years. His follies are sanctified by the colour of his hair. They should have respect unto his gray locks. He may commit absurdities, that would disgrace a school-boy, with impunity.

* Quere. Ears?—Printer's devil.

We have not leisure to dwell upon the many other imperfections of this production, but shall only notice the low and vulgar style in which it is written. The poet's characters all use the most uncouth and unpolished language, and often act in the most clownish manner, threatening to slap each other's jaws, &c. &c. How different, in this respect, from "one of the most deservedly popular writers in either hemisphere," the gifted author of "The Lady Jane," whose ideas never get outside of a drawing-room! It is a poet's duty to describe the insipid and silly scenes of fashionable life; or, if he ever condescends to visit the field, the forest, or the shore, or mingle among the busy crowd of the every-day world, he should make his shepherds, his fishermen, his clowns, converse in the most polished terms, and conduct themselves as if each were on his good behaviour.

But enough of the multiplied deformities of this little volume. It is the author's first folly of the kind, and we hope it will prove his last. Should we, however, be mistaken, and should he still persist,

> "in spite
> Of nature and his stars, to write,"

we fear his friends will have to—to—to—(is it possible that I have forgotten the stereotyped expression which I have been using for so many years? Ah! this is it!) to apply the remedy of a straight jacket.

THE PARADISE OF FOOLS,

OR THE

WONDERFUL ADVENTURES

OF

BEELZEBUB BUBBLE,

I.

I'm going to make a poem, gentle readers,
And ye most gentle, gracious critics too,
Who of the Muses' parterre are the weeders,
And roam with searching eyes their hot-beds through;
In this strange age there are prolific breeders
Of verse in bulky volumes not a few,
So I will write, who am just three and twenty,
And must, ere this, be wise enough a plenty.

II.

All now make books, and every man 's a poet,—
Of whom some, with most wondrous versatility,
Heels-over-head, do make the young muse go it,
As if they meant to show us her agility,
And in full many a tortur'd line they show it,
While some display in novels their ability,
Which maybe, with pathetic close, would steep
Us all in tears if we were not asleep.

III.

Then there 's Lorenzo Dow, who, e'er in season,
And out, was the stern enemy of evil,
Until he found his wonted vigor freezing,
Nor able then to tug it with the devil;
He set about to forge the "Chain of Reason,"
Composed of "five links, two hooks, and a swivel,"
And must have put his chain to use, I trow,
For reason seems chain'd hand and foot just now.

IV.

Well, poems must, as Aristotle says,
Each have beginning, ending, and a middle;
So saith each learned critic, since his days,
Who sifts the grains of poesy through his riddle.
In order therefore to begin our lays,
Miss Muse, just take your jews-harp, or your fiddle,
For, if there 's no beginning to this poem,
There 'll be no end—so come, no further proem,—

V.

But blazon forth how John Killall, a man
Of medicine, was seated in his study,
Sipping sweet comfort from a well-fill'd can,
With feet spread out before a coal-fire ruddy;
And how his mind, in retrospection, ran
Upon his many feats of triumph bloody,
Which sent poor souls, as swift as arrows shoot, to
The gloomy firm of Proserpine and Pluto.

VI.

There came a knock, and then a voice did hail—
The door was op'd—one met him with "good ev'ning."
"Good evening, sir—whence come you?" "From the jail." [ing.
"Who 's sick?" "No one." It was a source of griev-
"What want you then with me?" "I bring the mail.
A gentleman requested me to leave in
Your hands what will explain the business better
Than I can—if you will but read this letter."

VII.

The doctor scans it through his dark green goggles,
And grimly smiles, with most unfeign'd delight,
Looking as lovely as lone ghouls or bogles,
Upon a tomb, enjoying the moon-light,
As he th 'epistle thus so fondly ogles,
Holding it close unto his raptur'd sight,
And then exclaims, "My hat—my cloak—this weather
Is cursed bad.—And now, sir, we'll together."

VIII.

Forth went this goodly pair from out the hall;
The tempest roar'd, and they did buffet it
Till they attain'd the gloomy prison wall;
They reach'd the portal and did stoutly cuff at it,
Until some one responded to the call;
They went up a huge staircase, and did puff at it,
Until they found at length a lonely cell,
About as roomy as a Moscow bell.

IX.

They were admitted by the friendly jailor,
And there they saw, extended on the floor,
A man dress'd in the plain garb of a sailor,—
Yet he, who once the lion's cast-offs wore,
(Alcides, not the jackass) ne'er look'd haler;—
His limbs a most enormous body bore,
Or else, with their amazing longitude, egad! he
Had look'd like what is term'd by school-boys a grand-daddy.

X.

The fellow rose up from his posture humble,
And shook his limbs with chains encircl'd all over,
Which doubtless was the cause of his sad stumble,
For pitching forward, in his luckless fall over
A stool, he gave his guest good cause to grumble,
As his huge head, more dreadful than a maul over
One brandish'd in the fist of some Goliah,
Fell'd him ere he could ejaculate, O my! Ah!

XI.

Down sunk the doctor—up he rose again,
As lightly as a ball of India rubber;
More slowly rose the other with his chain,
And told our body-curer not to blubber,
For in good sooth his eyes began to rain,
From rage or anguish, and, like cudgel'd cub, or
School-boy, (fancying that there was a bone in
His body broken), he broke out a moaning.

XII.

"Ho! never mind, man—if a leg is broken,
You are a doctor, and with little trouble
Can make repairs!" A black frown did betoken
That the physician did endure the rub ill,
And was with stifled warlike feelings choking.
"Why, who the devil are you, sir?" "A Bubble
About to burst, my learned and worthy Galen—
Don't stare!—'tis true as I'm this cursed jail in.

XIII.

"Beelzebub Bubble is the honest man, sir,
You see before you, (if, through eyes that glisten
With divers dew-drops, see at all you can, sir,)
And whence I came, and wherefore they did christen
Me thus, I'll tell you; and perhaps 'twill answer
As well, by way of episode, to twist in
The thread of my discourse the sad adventure
Which in the end your humble servant sent here.

XIV.

"My father was an honest man of course,
And liv'd where the big dashing waves did bellow
Against the rock-ribb'd shore with all their force;
Shut from the world like bull-frog in a well, or
Within his granite quarters dark and coarse,
Save that with him dwelt many a worthy fellow,
Who, the strict lines 'twixt meum and 'twixt tuum,
Could ne'er perceive—at least they seldom drew 'em.

XV.

" For when the waves and whirlwind took a tussle,
And, in their wild confusion and uproar,
Some hapless shipwreck'd vessel chanc'd to jostle
Against the rocks that lay along the shore,
They search'd the wreck, and seiz'd, amid the bustle,
The shivering wretches, stripp'd off all they wore,
And then, instead of giving them a lift,
Without a rag they turn'd them all adrift.

XVI.

" Fishers of men they styl'd themselves, and they
Affirm'd they were a pure and spotless band;
For, when the sky bespoke a cloudless day,
And not a breath of air swept sea or land,
So that they had spare time to sing and pray,
No bellowing bulls, that spurn the flying sand,
E'er made a noise so loud and so prodigious
As did these people when they felt religious.

XVII.

" Of this queer sect my father was the pastor;
And as one day he dealt to each his rations,
In character of his spiritual master,
As, mounted on a gum-log, in strange fashions,
His arms and legs strove which should be the faster
Mov'd by most holy or unholy passions,—
They told him that his wife, with some small trouble,
Had manag'd to produce a little Bubble.

XVIII.

"It was your humble servant who thus came
Into the world, mid shouting and mid song:
And that he might grow up amid the same,
And in the service wax exceeding strong,
My worthy parents would select no name
Save what unto the Scriptures did belong,
And so they gave their spectacles a rub,
And search'd and found the name of Beelzebub.

XIX.

"My mother fancied it, but Nebuchadnezzar
My father wished to call me, or Abaddon,—
So words ran high, (as they did when ever good day, sir,
They bade to reason, and began to madden,)
When she (as she did when he ever could raise her)
Seized a big stick, to lay it my old dad on;
But he shut up, for, arguing with the poker,
He knew that Mrs. Bubble was no joker.

XX.

"So, thanks unto the poker, tongs, and shovel,
They nam'd me Beelzebub; and I soon grew,
Though coop'd up in my daddy's smoky hovel,
A goodly personage unto the view;
And I began my father's trade to love well,
And help'd to rob full many a shipwreck'd crew;
Or when he held forth, and became *uproarous*
In sacred music, I join'd in the chorus.

XXI.

"Thus I increas'd, 'mid pillage and mid worship,
Until I did a mighty stature reach;
When one day, as the waves had ceas'd to rush up
In foamy tumult on the rocky beach,
And the rude winds did all their murmurs hush up,
My father thought he 'd best get up to preach,
There being no hopes of wrecks amid the calm—
So he unmask'd his battery on old Sam.

XXII.

"And letting fly, as if he meant to rout
Whole troops of devils in his pious fury,
He clapp'd his hands, and stamp'd, and rais'd a shout,
As though each soul, by force of lungs, to cure he
Was fully bent;—and I do greatly doubt
If, when he'd finish'd, you'd there find a jury
To judge impartially a sinner's case,
They were so prepossess'd against the race.

XXIII.

"But in the midst there came a well-known sound—
'A wreck! a wreck!' Up sprung the pious throng,
That lay with contrite spirits on the ground,
Wallowing the dust, and dirt, and leaves among;—
O'er boxes, benches, stumps, they wildly bound,
Like nimble goats the Alpine crags among,
On, headlong, rushing to the sea-wash'd beach,
And leaving Daddy to himself to preach.

XXIV.

"But he cried out, 'Stop, friends, I do entreat—
Oh, pause! reflect! consider what ye do!
Return! stay! harken unto counsel meet!
Sweet friends, just listen to a word or two!'
His voice prevail'd—they stopp'd—and, from his seat
Descending, near unto the crowd he drew
In haste; and, when he found he had got there,
He cried out, '*Brethren, let us all start fair!*'

XXV.

"Then off they went, like greyhounds from the slip!
As straight as balls fly from exploded cannon;
None fast as parson Bubble's self did skip
Along, as though he for a wager ran on;
But, ah! he stumbled—fell—and out did rip
A luckless oath, as he perceiv'd a man on
His stomach place his foot, and thought it right,
When he got up, to challenge him to fight.

XXVI.

"The rest, though willing, were exceeding dull men,
Moving along as though their feet were lead,
Whom I'd not choose, if I did chance to cull men,
To win a race.—So I got far ahead,
And reach'd the shore, where, on a bit of hull, men
Had floated, stiff, and motionless, and dead,—
They were but two—one shot, and t'other stabb'd,
Who in his fist a dog's paw tightly grabb'd.

XXVII.

" Some boiler, bursting, sent them with one dog
To float, without provisions, on a deck;
With fasting each grew greedy as a hog,
And so they sever'd the poor spaniel's neck,
And, drinking up his blood instead of grog,
The beast kept them alive upon the wreck,
Until, disputing over the last paw,
They finally appeal'd to nature's law.

XXVIII.

" That paw a bone of sad contention grew,
And terribly aveng'd poor murder'd Ranger;
This I regarded not, but on me drew
The coat and trowsers of the biggest stranger,
An action which I soon had cause to rue,
And found I'd thrust my good self into danger,
For, ere of plunder I had got my fill,
I saw some men come riding down the hill.

XXIX.

" My lagging friends, whom I had left behind,
Fled when the horsemen first had come in sight,
And hid themselves, because they had no mind
To stay and welcome them with much delight.
'Twas justice's myrmidons, who came to find
Your humble servant in an awkward plight,
As they dash'd down, as though each had old Harry on
Behind, to where I robb'd the sailor's carrion.

XXX.

"I stopp'd not then to bid the strangers welcome—
A thought like that ne'er enter'd once my head—
But, e'en as if I'd seen a troop of hell come,
I took unto my friendly heels and fled
Away, while my pursuers did pell-mell come
Clattering behind with execrations dread;
But, from my knowledge of the uneven ground,
I disappear'd, and thought I'd safety found.

XXXI.

"Most desperately I rush'd along, and made
As wild a sight as you e'er set your eyes on,
Until I plung'd into a forest shade
As dark as though the day had left the horizon.
On, on I rush'd, and reach'd an open glade,
When, as I could no longer hear more cries on
The rear, I stopp'd, and thought that it were best,
As I was breathless, to sit down and rest.

XXXII.

"So I sat down, amid the open space,
Upon the soft and grassy sod reclining,
And 'twixt my knees my borrow'd hat did place,
And, as the sun just o'er that spot was shining,
I buried in its ample depths my face,
And fix'd my curious gaze upon the lining,
And then, alas!—confound that rhyming fellow!
If I e'er meet him, how I'll make him bellow!

XXXIII.

"The owner, who upon the wreck lay slain,
Had lin'd it with a bit of huge newspaper,
Called 'Brother Jonathan,' which did contain
A poem, only fit to light a taper,
Or wipe a razor, call'd 'The Lady Jane;'
O'er which sad stuff the modest bard did vapour,
Puff'd it himself, and said '*a great sensation*
'*T would cause in this and in the British nation.*'

XXXIV.

"A great sensation!—Faith! 't was as he said—
Oh, doctor! doctor! did you e'er a dose
Of laudanum take, and then your drowsy head
Upon a pillow, cramm'd with hops, repose,
And covering up yourself within the bed
Hold a huge bunch of poppies to your nose?
Then, only then! you e'er can guess the feeling
Which heavily was o'er my senses stealing.

XXXV.

"I read—Oh that I 'd never learnt to spell!—
Three sleepy stanzas, and could read no more,
For o'er my frame a drowsy numbness fell,
Which clos'd each eyelid like a leaden door,
And I imagine (but of course can't tell)
I scar'd the wild birds with my sonorous snore;
But this I can say, that I had a dream
Which even to think of makes me to blaspheme.

XXXVI.

"Methought the poet and his works were tied
About my neck, and that I then was thrown
Into foul Lethe's dark oblivious tide,
Where, as I mid the filthy mud did moan,
His books, to tadpoles turn'd, did o'er me glide,
While he himself, a mammoth bull-frog grown,
Seiz'd on my luckless neck with grip so fell
That I awoke with a terrific yell.

XXXVII.

"I yell'd—and op'd my eyes—and yell'd again—
Then started up—and well I might do so!
Accursed bard! to you! to you! this chain—
To you alone this sad mishap I owe!
Had you ne'er spawn'd forth your dull, stupid strain,
I now had been as free as forest doe;—
But Oh! alas! your verses have undone me!
I slept, and my pursuers came upon me!

XXXVIII.

"I woke—one by the shoulder did me nab hard,
Like mastiff grim engag'd in fierce cynarctomachy;
Another drew his sabre from the scabbard,
Ready (as I did tremblingly remark) to hack a
Limb off, if from the one who did me grab hard
I strove to run; while keenly as a shark, to pack a
Whole boat's crew in his belly all intent,
A third his eager eyes upon me bent.

XXXIX.

"I was o'erpower'd, and so I struck my flag,
For certes 't would become me to resist ill,
Who had no sword from shining sheath to drag,
Nor e'en a rusty knife, or dirk, or pistol,
Or else (albeit I do not mean to brag)
Those same three gentlemen had seen me bristle,
And soon discover'd that they 'd caught a Tartar,
But ill-dispos'd to be a patient martyr.

XL.

"But, as it was, they dragg'd me off to jail,
And afterwards unto the courts of law;
And there the keenest counsel all did fail
In the indictment to find out a flaw;
And so they spoke, but yet without avail,
Pathetically of the spaniel's paw,
For others told the jury of the dead,
And how I was discover'd there and fled.

XLI.

"The judge drew on his big black cap, and told
Me to be hang'd till I was dead, dead, dead;
There being naught worse to fear then, I grew bold,
And haughtily unto his honour said,
'Sir, since to me such language you do hold,
Just kiss my foot till it is red, red, red.'
The lawyers laugh'd, the jury all look'd curious,
The clerks star'd wildly, and the judge grew furious.

XLII.

"This, doctor, brings us to the affair in hand;—
Now, as I'm soon to have a hempen collar,
And can but live a short time in the land,
'Mid frolic, fun, and plenty I would wallow,
And make the most of life; but at command
I've little cash—so give me a ten dollar
Bank-note t' expend in gin and brandy toddy,
And duly I'll bequeath to you my body."

XLIII.

"It is too much, friend Beelzebub." "Too little
You mean to say;—but 'tis no use to higgle—
I'll not abate my price one jot or tittle.
Too much, d'ye say? Why, Lord! a good fat pig 'ill
Bring that almost to fill a pot or kettle."
The doctor 'gan to twist, and turn, and wriggle,
And then the money from his pocket drew,
Because he found 'twas fruitless for to jew.

XLIV.

Time flew—the day arriv'd—the crowd collected
Where, 'mid a large and spacious jail-yard green, a
Tall, dreadful looking gallows was erected;
Their numbers fill'd the whole of the arena;
The man was hung—with rope about his neck, did
Desp'rately dance on nothing—first was seen a
Few supple kicks—then, after a short shiver,
Poor Beelzebub had ceas'd to be a liver.

XLV.

The hangman cut him down (some said too soon),
And, when the heavens grew dark from east to west,
The body, by the light of the clear moon [he sent
Unto the doctor, as the final testament,
Found in the pocket of the drunken loon,
All duly signed, directed—thus 'twas guess'd he meant
At least, albeit a cramp'd and crooked hand he
Did write, his nerves being shaken by the brandy.

XLVI.

The doctor thank'd the man that brought the body—
And, as in the beginning of our story,
We found him sipping from a can of toddy,
So he did now;—and, as he mellow'd, swore he
Wish'd Bubble well, and hop'd the rugged road he
Had 'scap'd which leads poor souls to purgatory,
And, imprecating evil on his eyes,
He said the man was fit for Paradise.

XLVII.

"An honest fellow—keeps his promise—hiccup!"
He set the body upright in the closet,
And stagger'd to the table, and did pick up
The can, and fondly thrust unto his nose it.—
"A clever cock!—and for a drop did stick up"—
Here in his throat a pint he did deposit—
"A worthy man!—they say he lov'd good rum,
And, by old Bacchus! I will give him some."

XLVIII.

He now was senseless as a Corybante,
Thumping upon a brazen pan or kettle,
Or drunken Pat, stretch'd out before a shanty;
He swore that Beelzebub should have a little—
Yet down his throat he did not pour a scanty
Portion of liquor, nor imagin'd it ill
To give him now what, when alive, each shilling he
Would always part with, to obtain, most willingly.

XLIX.

Thus the kind-hearted sot pour'd consolation
Into his friend the best way he was able,
(For such he always deem'd a full potation,)
And then he stagger'd back unto the table,
Like good ship toss'd on billow's undulation;
Set down the bottle, and, with step unstable,
Totter'd, and lurch'd, and, pitching forward o'er
A chair, fell on the bed, and 'gan to snore.

L.

He loudly slept, and terribly he snorted
As e'er did war-steed on the field of strife;
He dreamt a pleasant dream, and, as he thought, did
Stand o'er poor Beelzebub with gleaming knife,
And carv'd him neatly up, and so assorted
The various parts as pleas'd him to the life.
He starts!—he wakes!—Oh, God! as cold as death,
A hand upon his throat impedes his breath.

LI.

The moon-beams fell within the room, and dimly
He saw a form, by the uncertain light,
Which his wild fears made big as cottage chimney,
Fast by the bedside, standing bolt upright,
Naked, and horrible, and gazing grimly.
The doctor, had he been a man of fight,
Had at that fearful vision turn'd a Quaker,
And eke become a non-resisting Shaker.

LII.

But John Killall was never more than half a man,
That is (especially when drunk), a demi-John;
Besides, 'twas not a thing at which might laugh a man
Of courage, when such horrid sights burst him upon—
'Twere 'nough to make as timid as a calf a man
To see a huge, tall, naked form glare grim upon
Him 'mid the gloom, like tom-cat on a mouse,
When there was not a soul about the house.

LIII.

For, being wifeless, he'd but one poor slave,
Who'd run away—so he was all alone.—
The huge paw clutch'd his throat, but ere he gave
The ghost up, he gave forth a piteous moan,—
"Oh! oh!"—"Wake up!"—"Avaunt!"—"Come, stir
Old fellow!—'Tis no use to grunt and groan; [my brave
You are a fool to give yourself such trouble!
I will not eat you—I am but a Bubble."

LIV.

The doctor sprung as though a burning bullet
Had lodg'd itself within his brain or breast,
And squall'd as loudly as a frighten'd pullet
With hungry weasel's claws about its crest.—
The dead alive!—appalling thought!—how full it
Was of horror!—When he lay down to rest
Poor Beelzebub was stiff as a corn-stalk in
The closet, and behold him now a talking!

LVI.

He leapt about, and cut such capers antic,
And did as much agility display,
As ever Madam Ellsler, though she can kick
Her chaste and modest heels so high for pay,—
For fear had almost made the doctor frantic;—
At last he dropp'd upon his knees to pray,
And did for once those haughty joints unbrace,
And begg'd the Powers to pity his sad case.

LVII.

Reader, I know you think that I am lying,
Like Captain Booby in his book of travels,
So, in few words as possible replying,
I will endeavour to hush up your cavils.—
The man was not hung dead—the brandy flying
Right down his throat, reviv'd him. This unravels,
Without a doubt, the mystery of the story,
And lays it plain as daylight all before ye.

LVIII.

With this Killall was duly made acquainted,
But not till after some hours did elapse;
For first he prayed, and then with terror fainted—
But Bubble puts the bottle 'twixt his chaps,
And soon a gentle tinge his cheeks hath painted—
Death's paleness vanishes—he struggles—gapes—
And opes his eyes—looks up—and loudly bellows,
And thinks his life he to a demon fell owes.

LIX.

But time will make the doubter a believer—
Ay! even the stoutest that did ever cram any
Of the foul precepts of that she deceiver,
(The manly Fanny, "Venus" of great Tammany),
Right down his throat—some day perhaps 'twill grieve her
(Though I wish not to ship off to old Sam any)
To see grim Death *annihilate annihilation*,
And other doctrines that afford such consolation.

LX.

No snorting, praying Puritan am I;
I hate, as serpents hated by a frog, any
Of these same hypocrites who feign and lie,
And yet my heart 's not harden'd like mahogany,
That I can think, when those I cherish die,
They'll live no more. No better than a dog, any
Fellow can be who triumphs in the thought
Of seeing all he loves reduc'd to naught.

LXI.

But to leave off digressions, which I own
Are out of place—experience that will make
The skeptic a believer (as we've shown),
Convinc'd the doctor that what he did take
For spirit, was but flesh, and blood, and bone,
And that it was, in short, a sad mistake
To fancy his friend Beelzebub a demon,
Merely because at first he chanc'd to seem one.

LXII.

Let's skip some hours, just fancying that the pair
Had meanwhile to an explanation come ;—
'Twas noon, and, Beelzebub being dress'd, they were
Together seated in a private room ;
A table was spread out between them, where
The bottles blush'd with brandy and with rum ;
The doctor first a hearty pull did take,
Then thus unto his boon companion spake :—

LXIII.

" Friend Beelzebub, since, causing me affright,
You rous'd me up, ere it was twelve o'clock,
Out of a pleasant dream, I think you might,
Just to repay me for the awful shock,
Tell what you saw, when on your airy flight
To regions where th' unbodied spirits flock,
Unless, while tarrying in the land of ghosts,
Some secrets pass'd between you and your hosts."

LXIV.

Quoth Beelzebub, "Friend doctor, pass the bottle;—
And now just promise not to interrupt,
And you may find your queries answer'd not ill.
Jack-ketch (as vile a dog as e'er was pupt)
Put rope, as you well know, about my throttle,
And then did launch me, with a kick abrupt,
(For which he'll feel the weight of this same hand,)
From off existence' narrow neck of land.

LXV.

"Doctor, I can't describe the strange sensation
I felt in dying, but can only say
That it did hurt me like the very nation
At first, and then the pangs did pass away,
And I sprang forth amid the wide creation,
An airy ghost, freed from my load of clay,
And skimm'd the air as lightly as an owl,
Or hawk, or crow, or any winged fowl.

LXVI.

"I felt most joyous at my liberty,
And on my viewless pinions sail'd along
Swifter than humming-bird, or bug, or bee,
Or blithesome butterfly the flowers among;
Nor able longer to contain my glee,
I 'gan to hum a spiritual song,
Which once was cudgel'd into me with trouble
By my good dad, the reverend Parson Bubble.

LXVII.

"I sung—and lo! a fiery comet, flinging
Its tail abroad, came rushing down the air,
Mayhaps attracted by my charming singing
From its ethereal home—who knows?—for there
Was Orpheus, whose primeval anthems ringing
Caus'd rocks to dance, and Pluto's self to swear
His wife should go—mov'd by his song's attraction—
Our bards had mov'd him too—ay! to distraction.

LXVIII.

"Now, friend, I fear you'll think I am a ranker
Liar than e'er was traveller before,
When I assert that comet came to anchor
Right o'er my head, like a huge seventy-four
Or Spanish galleon, dreading some dark bank, or
Hidden rock, lies off the adjacent shore;—
But 'tis a solemn fact—and on it lay
A spirit strange, that kept its course in sway.

LXIX.

"The spirit rose and plac'd his arms akimbo,
And, looking at me, said, with a queer wink,
'Young chap, you'll leave awhile this lower limbo,
And take an airy jaunt with me, I think.'
He ceas'd—I felt as if I must with him go;
So up I sprung, and, lighting on the brink
Of his conveyance with an airy bound,
I sat me down as on the solid ground.

LXX.

"And then the comet courser wagg'd his tail,
And off we went! as swift as from the sun
A beam of light shoots to this lower vale
Of darkness, or a ball from a big gun.
Away! along the milky path-way pale,
The turnpike of the gods, we swiftly run,
And 'mid the rolling planets, while our ears
Were greeted by the music of the spheres,

LXXI.

"Which we'd no time to harken unto then,
But shot along upon our airy journey,
Unnumber'd miles above th' abodes of men,
While round our path, on every side did burn a
Million of starry chandeliers.—But when
We reach'd the highest point, my guide did turn a
Little downward, and then began to go
As swift as ever to the world below.

LXXII.

"Adown th' ethereal turnpike we did roll—
Stopping to sup with the man in the moon—
Then o'er the ocean to the southern pole
Of little earth, where we arriv'd full soon;
And here there is a most tremendous hole,
(For all the earth is hollow as a spoon),
Where is a Paradise, some author says—
I fancied something worse in my young days.

LXXIII.

"The Paradise of Fools it is,—located
By Johnny Milton over the backside
Of the broad earth—Our comet here abated
His course, and from his back we both did slide,
And found a lonely vessel that awaited
Us, setting like a sea-gull on the tide,
And in the stern there was an aged Charon,
Who look'd quite grim, with big, black, bushy hair on.

LXXIV.

"The little boat was fill'd with authors quite,
All journeying to the Paradise of Fools,
Who, huddled all together, seem'd to sight
As sage and grave as asses, or as mules;
The least of them had made a book in spite
Of Nature, Common Sense, and Reason's rules,
And they had all upon the earth been sent,
Like locusts, for men's crimes a punishment.

LXXV.

"A host of bards, too numerous far to name,
Who scorn'd Castalian waves for a mud-puddle,
Besides some scores of rhymeless sons of fame,
Who, having fulfill'd their mission, in a huddle
Were squatted in the boat—nor should you blame
Me if I proudly held aloft my noddle,
And felt extremely vain as I bethought me
To what high company the halter 'd brought me.

LXXVI.

"Well, here we were—and every precious soul
Was journeying to the land of Paradise;
And soon we came unto that mighty hole,
Which widely gap'd before our won'dring eyes;
We enter'd, and the joyous waves did roll
Us 'neath a light like that of northern skies,
When splendid meteors on the surface play,
And make a sunless, never-ending day.

LXXVII.

"Within this place we, in our little boat, did
Enter forthwith, and there spread out before us
Unnumber'd pleasant isles, 'mid which we floated—
They were, my comet-rider did assure us,
Th' abodes of such as on the earth devoted
Themselves to Folly, and did swell her chorus
The loudest of the sons of mortal men,
And serv'd her faithfully with voice and pen.

LXXVII.

"Right in the entrance of this place did stand
A kind of custom-house, or court—erected
That they might smuggle nothing contraband
In here, but that all things might be inspected;—
So that none e'er might enter this sweet land
Of fools, save only those who were selected
Because of the high earthly eminence
They'd gain'd in waging war on Common Sense.

LXXIX.

"One met us here with, 'You are welcome, brothers,
Into the Paradise of Fools, I'm sure;
Albeit there have so very many others
Come crowding in of late upon this shore,
That their vast multitude now almost smothers
Old Bavius, who, with Mævius and some more,
Doth sit in judgment yonder to inspect
The crowd, and the unworthy to reject.'

LXXX.

"He led us where these men of ancient days,
With several others of more modern date,—
M'Flecknoe, Dennis, and the bard whose lays
And tartar the same way did operate,
And in the stomach a rebellion raise—
Great Doctor Blackmore—and some others sate—
All men who once administer'd the curse
Unto poor mortals of dull prose and verse.

LXXXI.

"Translated to this Paradise, they were
Forthwith exalted to the bench, because
Of their known zeal for dullness.—Seated there,
Their business was t' administer the laws
Of this same place impartially and fair,
So that no one might enter, save it was
First prov'd (on Bavius' dullest tome they swore)
That with his books he'd made his hundreds snore.

LXXXII.

" Authors alone were by these judges tried—
(Though there were courts for other dunces too,
Where other judges also did preside) ;—
When we were usher'd in, there was no few
Of learned writers stow'd on every side ;
And on the bench, quite awful to the view,
Great Bavius and his brethren held their place,
And were deciding on a scribbler's case.

LXXXIII.

" ' Come, fellow,' said old Bavius, ' will you cease
Those struts awhile ?—for I would have you know
That not of the ' Faex Populi' are these
Same folks that you must mix with here below ;
So lower your lofty crest, and, if you please,
Some cause or reason unto us just show
Why we should let you in.' Quoth he, ' I'll try it, or
By Dullness' sacred name ! I'm not the Viator.

LXXXIV.

" ' Why should I be admitted, d'ye inquire,
Into the Paradise of Fools ? By Jupiter !
It is enough to set a man on fire,
To harken unto questions such as you put here !
Who dare deny my right ? 'Tis true no lyre
I've strung like you, O Bavius ! yet no stupider
Dull volumes ever plagu'd a luckless nation
Than those which I've sent forth without cessation.

LXXXV.

"'Why should I be admitted? Have I not
Written long disquisitions on the laws
As dull and heavy as a bag of shot?
Or if, perchance, there's sometimes sense, oh, pause!
Reflect! and let it never be forgot
That finest marble even has some flaws!
And, if I did, indeed, sometimes write sense,
'Twas 'gainst my will—so pardon the offence.

LXXXVI.

"'Besides, is not the Viator enough
T' admit me to the Paradise of Fools?
For, though I'm modest, I'll aver such stuff
Did never yet sink 'mid oblivion's pools,
As this same book, so heavy that no puff
Of my most faithful friends and clever tools,
A brace of editors, could ever raise
The thing to notice with inflated praise.

LXXXVII.

"So, being a thing of dullness and obscurity,
You'll think of its pretensions none the humbler;
And yet I really know not if before it I
Had not far better place the famous "Grumbler,"
Which of your favour is my best security;
For though, O Mævius, you once rode a stumbler
For a Pegasus, yet your heaviest strain
Would seek to equal this dull prose in vain.

LXXXVIII.

"'And have I not held forth on dream and vision,
And taught my drowsy audience how to sleep?
And when they afterwards expressed a wish, on
Some subject grave, to hear a lecture deep,
As if to treat the project with derision,
And show I thought them all but senseless sheep,
Did I not go back to the bloody Jews—ahem!
And talk about the burning of Jerusalem?

LXXXIX.

"'Besides, have I not shown the loathsome rabble—
(Who heeded not for want of informatian,
Nor 'd send me to the Capitol to babble,
Though 'tis well known that once a mighty nation
Was sav'd by ganders' patriotic gabble)—
Have I not shown them that a reformation
Can ne'er be had, though at the work they hammer
Till doomsday, save they have a proper drama?'

XC.

"'Bravo!' cried Bavius; 'let the fellow in!
His title to admission is quite clear!'
'Amen!' said Mævius; ''twere a burning sin
And shame to keep him longer waiting here.'
The bench applauded, and a general din
Ran through the court-room, follow'd by a cheer.
'Silence!' cried Bavius; 'peace! And now straightway
Him in our 'custom'd uniform array.'

XCI.

"A splendid pair of asses ears were brought,
And plac'd upon him without more ado;
The fellow prick'd them up, and, as I thought,
Exulted vastly in these honours new;
A long and bushy tail was also sought,
And added to his decorations too,
Which he did proudly wave with graceful switches,
As through a hole it pok'd behind his breeches.

XCII.

"And then they op'd a door to let him out
To Paradise—at which he cut a caper,
And, mad with joy, did wildly frisk about,
And play'd more antics than did nimble ape e'er;
Then loudly bray'd, 'O Bavius! without doubt
You will reward the writers in each paper,
Who prais'd my works!' Cried Bavius, 'To-be-sure!'
At which he vanish'd through the open door.

XCIII.

"Bring forth th' American, and also let
His brother Patriot take his place beside him.
Our friend hath told us (if I don't forget)
That you two gentlemen with puffs supplied him;
And that you've brought him greatly in your debt
By praising him when others did deride him:—
Say if 'tis so, and on what grounds you rest
Your expectations of here being bless'd.'

XCIV.

"'What grounds?' cried they: "why, is it not enough
That we have prais'd this fellow's load of lead,
And to each piece of nonsense lent a puff,
Merely because he was high-born and bred?
And do we not praise all the silly stuff
That issues from a foreign coxcomb's head—
And then with want of notice would put down
Each man of merit in our native town?

XCV.

"'For,' quoth the Patriot, 'there 's one Natty Brooks
(Whom ne'er let in if he should come this way,
For he persists in writing clever books);
I pass'd him o'er in silence, till one day
Good brother Benjamin cast fav'ring looks
On some few verses that had gone astray
Of his, and call'd them Norton's,—when, Oh Lord!
I nearly burst, endeavouring to applaud.'

XCVI.

"'As for my claims, good Bavius, be it known'
(Exclaim'd the other) 'that I am a writer
Myself, to whom small favour hath been shown,
Except by dunces,—which did not delight e'er,
But rather stirr'd my gall, as I must own,
And in the end transform'd me to a biter;—
And as a terrapin, hid in the mud,
Wishing to snap, is seen above the flood,

XCVII.

" ' So such as I do into notice rise
When with our critic's spite we seek to tilt one
Of Genius' sons from where the public eyes
Are fix'd upon him.—Bryant, Dawes, McJilton,
Dana, Cooper, Ingraham I despise,
And have a mind to curry down old Milton.
I hate all Indian stories, and alone am I
In favour of political economy.

XCVIII.

" ' 'Tis true, when we do drop the cudgel critical
(That is, myself and my good brother here),
And, letting authors be, become political,
Most gracious judges, we do greatly fear
That we have grown so sadly heteroclitical
As to write pages sensible and clear;
But we repent, and hope that will prevail
On you to grant to each the ears and tail.'

XCIX.

" The court declar'd they were exceeding loth
To tear an ornament from either brow,
And if they 'd put themselves upon their oath,
And give their solemn, sacred pledge, and vow
T' abstain from politics, they would to both
The ears and tail most willingly allow.—
'Twas done—they were equipp'd, and, when 'twas o'er,
Let into Paradise, and seen no more.

C.

" ' Well, as we've sent to Paradise an editor
Or two already, let us have some more;
And, by the by, there 's one, who is a creditor,
Now standing here, for quite a heavy score;
At least he 's by his actions loudly said it (or
I've lost my recollection) o'er and o'er.—
Come, bring us hither brother Benjamin!
And now, good Ben, why should we let you in?'

CI.

" ' May 't please the court,' said he, ' I will not fib it,
As editors are known to do sometimes,
But faithfully my just demands exhibit;—
Well, first of all, I've tortur'd little rhymes,
And strung them up, as felons on a gibbet
Are punish'd for their foul misdeeds and crimes;
And, when I've rack'd them into strange contortions,
I misname poesy the foul abortions.

CII.

" ' Besides, I'm a philanthropist, and do
Contribute greatly to the world's repose,
By penning, ever and anon, a few
Unwieldly paragraphs of stupid prose,
Which, with their dull, oblivious powers, unto
Forgetful sleep my readers all compose,
And give unto the sons of care and toil
A pleasing absence of the world's turmoil.

CIII.

" ' I praise myself, because I can't prevail
On other folks t' applaud a single lay;—
And, mighty judges, if you grant a tail,
Oh let it be a peacock's tail, I pray!
That I may spread it out before the gale,
And strut about in my accustom'd way,
Provided it is not against the rules
Which regulate the Paradise of Fools.'

CIV.

" ' Assuredly, good sir,' (the judge replied, as
He gave a smile benignant and serene,)
We'll not refuse to you a tale as wide as
Was ever on a turkey-gobler seen;
And you shall also be like ancient Midas,
And have your head two mighty ears between.—
But first of Natty Brooks!—come just report
The whole of that affair unto the court.'

CV.

" ' Well, please you honours, the affair stands thus:
Brooks is a man of genius, you must know,
And writes such verses as are scorn'd by us
Who gain admittance to these realms below;—
Therefore I've o'er his lays e'er made a fuss,
(I treat the best of native writers so,)
And fretted and fum'd, and swore they were not passable,
And that I hardly deem'd them e'en jack-assable.

CVI.

"'One day I captur'd several straggling rhymes,
Which every body own'd were pretty fair,
(Though Brooks hath written better oftentimes;)
The devil put it in my head they were
Written by one who dwelt in foreign climes,
(A Madam Norton,) so I did declare
They were superb, (I praise imported books,
Or good or bad,) when, lo! the lays were Brooks'!

CVII.

"'I scorn all native writers, save the worst,
And deem my own productions most divine;
I puff them till I'm almost fit to burst,
And fancy half the 'World' of letters mine;
And yet he who imagines that as first
I in the ranks of self-applauders shine,
Is labouring under quite a grievous error,—
For there 's my worthy brother of the Mirror.'

CVIII.

"Quoth Bavius, 'Bring the Mirror into court,
For in a lump we might as well reward,
As soon as possible, this latter sort,
Whose business is their own good selves t' applaud;
For if we don't—from making a report,
In their own favour, they will scarce be aw'd
E'en by our presence and express command;—
So straightway call the Mirror to the stand.

CIX.

" ' And now, good Mr. Mirror, please to mention
The grounds on which you found superior claims
Unto a larger portion of attention
Than all the rest of these illustrious names.'
' Upon what grounds?—why, please the learned bench, on
The well-known fact' (he pompously exclaim'd)
' That I have sacrific'd on Dullness' shrines
Whole hecatombs of most unmeaning lines.

CX.

" ' Upon an oyster I have penn'd a libel,
And, foully filching the poor fish's spirit,
Infus'd it into songs I can't describe well,
Nor tell the half of their transcendent merit;
Yet ne'ertheless I'll swear (not on the Bible,
But Blackmore's Epics) that they did inherit
Due praise on earth from men of Mævian mind;—
' A fellow feeling made them wondrous kind.'

CXI.

" ' But on these grounds I do not found my title,
Nor mean to rest exclusively my case;
For in the Mirror (where great men, who right well
Have earn'd by merit a conspicuous place,
Have all their portraits) your astonish'd sight will
Behold the glory of my brazen face:—
Who lauds himself, 'gainst Modesty's known rules,
Is surely fit for Paradise of Fools.

CXII.

" ' And am I not, besides, a mighty General,
And, like great General Boon, a pioneer?
And, 'stead of sword and axe, did with my pen o'er all
The wilds of literature a pathway clear
For my good brother editors, e'en when o'er all
Their faces spread despondency and fear,—
I made the press just what it now appears.'—
' You did!' cried Bavius.—' Ho! the tail! the ears!'

CXIII.

" ' Stop! stop! nor be in such a dreadful hurry, e'er;
But let me do due justice unto others.
Though I did shock dame Modesty, and worry her,
As spoilt, unbeaten brats do vex their mothers,
Yet these two fellows of the Saturday Courier,
My very worthy and respected brothers,
Could ever, at administ'ring a puff
Unto themselves, surpass me far enough.'

CXIV.

" They were brought forward, and forthwith declar'd
That what the General said was very true,
For that, both day and night, they labour'd hard
To give unto themselves their rightful due,
And for that purpose every week prepar'd
Whole swelling paragraphs of praises new,
Which left but little room for them to pack in
Murders, and fires, and verses of McMakin.

CXV.

" 'Enough! enough! And now, my four good fellows,
Just stand along here all before my eyes!—
And, that no one among them may be jealous,
Give each a peacock's tail of the same size,
And put into each hand a pair of bellows,
With bellyful of swelling puffs and sighs,
So that each man may kindly puff his brother,
And thus they'll mutually assist each other.'

CXVI.

" They all felt pleas'd unto their very souls,
And proudly swell'd like stately turkey-cocks;
All spread their tails, as Juno's pompous fowls
Display their grandeur to the feather'd flocks;
And yet they look'd as sage as solemn owls,
That moralize at midnight to the rocks,
As, with his ass's ears and peacock's plume,
Each gravely strutted from the crowded room.

CXVII.

' Like goodly goblers, they went strutting out,
With spangled tails all proudly hoisted o'er 'em.—
Old Bavius fondly gaz'd—they turn'd about
And bade another dunce be brought before 'em.
They came so thick that I began to doubt
If on the earth there 'd long be left a quorum;
In which event there 'd be a dearth of folly,
Which was a thought extremely melancholy.

CXVIII.

" Cried Bavius, ' Let 's endeavour to get through
The pressing business of the court as soon
As e'er we can.—And who the deuce are you
That comes before us now, sir? What! buffoon,
Bard, critic, * * * * * * * too!
Or came you from the earth, or from the moon?
You ' come in such a questionable shape,'
I hardly know if 'tis a man or ape.'

CXIX.

" Quoth he, ' I publish'd once a Magazine,
Which as the Gentleman's was widely known,
Betwixt whose pretty covers of light green
* * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * *
I wrote ' The Light-ship and'—' the Light-ship? ho!
Give him the ears and tail, and let him go.

CXX.

" ' But who comes hither with that curious jumble
Of vials and verses in his paws. Oh did a man e'er
Before upon so queer a fellow stumble!
Who are you, sir?' ' Why I'm *. *. **,
Whose many claims are any thing but humble,
And must gain him admittance:—so bid ye manna,
Nectar, ambrosia—every thing that 's nice,
To be prepar'd for me in Paradise.'

CXXI.

" ' Nectar—ambrosia !' said the judges ; ' pshaw !
His head is running now on heathen food ;
But here you'll cram such things into your maw
As th' essence of a donkey's brain well stew'd,
Which makes you, when your gander quill you claw,
Write the duller, my dear. But have you good,
And proper, and sufficient grounds t' admission
Into the place where you may dine this dish on.'

CXXII.

" Quoth he, ' Indeed I scarcely understand you, sirs ;
For aught I know, you speak unmeaning jargon ;
But if I can engage you, Mævius, and you, sirs,
Good Bavius and good Blackmore, in a bargain
To read these little verses which I hand you, sirs, '
I think you'll own that I am pretty far gone
In folly, and will be convinc'd at once
Your humble servant 's a confounded dunce.

CXXIII.

" ' It is an eulogy which I have penn'd
* * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * *
In other words, my poor abus'd ******."
' The lines,' quoth Bavius, ' truly put an end
Unto all doubts—so ** you may dance it
Along ' upon the light fantastic toe'
To Paradise as soon 's you wish to go.'

CXXIV.

"The fellow took the studs and wouldn't budge,
But, turning up his glist'ning eye and nose,
He op'd his mouth, and said unto the judge
That he would like to read some bits of prose,
Which were in fact his master-pieces.—'Fudge!'
Cried Bavius: 'do you really then suppose,
My **** that we never chanc'd to see 'em
Disgrace the ********* or the ******?'

CXXV.

"He cock'd his tail, then said, 'Have you e'er seen
A little volume, with two azure covers,
(The best part of the work, by far, I ween,)
Containing, first of all, the 'Polish Lovers,'
And other nonsense 'twixt two lids of green?
I ask you—for my knowing eye discovers,
Ev'n now amid the crowd, the gentle bard—
And won't your honours give him a reward?'

CXXVI.

"'Why, yes!—it will not do to overlook
The man who taught the world the reason why
Job wish'd his enemy to write a book,—
Although he nearly had escap'd my eye,
Squatted upon his hams in yonder nook;
But haul him forth, and we will not deny
To you, kind-hearted *** your request,
But he shall in your company be bless'd.

CXXVII.

" ' So both together go.—And who is here?'
'I am,' said he, the man who, for the hero
Of a long string of verse not very clear,
Did take a two-legg'd nothing call'd Cabiro.
' The reason why I in your court appear
Is that my earthly fame is down at zero,
For there all sensible and clever men did
Affirm the thing could ne'er be comprehended.'

CXXVIII.

" Quoth Bavius, ' Is it not, my honest fellow,
Written in the Italian verse, octave?'
' It is,' replied the bard. ' The cover 's yellow?'
' It is, sir.' ' With Count Julien you once gave
Small pleasure to the purchaser or seller,
And brought Don Carlos to an English grave
By foully murd'ring Schiller?' ' Yes.' ' The tail!
And now, sir, march off in the others' trail.

CXXIX.

" ' And now just make way for the great Yemassee,
The man who strove to knock the lights and livers
From sense and nature, when he did harass ye
Poor probability in his ' Guy Rivers,'
And ' Damsel,' where just like a vicious ass he,
With spiteful heels, kick'd fiercely into shivers
Your barriers strong, and thus an awful wreck did
Sternly make of what all ages had respected.

CXXX.

" ' So let him in. And tell me who are you?'
' O, sir,' said he, ' I truly am a Bird,
Who on *non usitata penna* flew,
(As in old Horace's phase may be averr'd,)
And turn'd a very famous songster too ;
For all the vulgar many, when they heard
My song about the old blaspheming ' Broker,'
Cried out, ' Have we an owl or a shitepoke here?' '

CXXXI.

" ' Well, let him in.—And who are you?' ' I wrote
The Rival Harps.' ' You did?—and Melodies?'
' E'en so.' ' And in your Clipper set afloat
Some neat poetic wares?' ' Yes,' he replies.—
Well Charon needn't have lumber'd thus his boat
With such stuff as you,' old Bavius fiercely cries :
' Ho ! fellows, turn him out of doors at once !
He has no business here ! he is no dunce !

CXXXII.

" ' And, brethren of the bench, I think that we,
For fear some more our business may impede,
Had better straightway issue a decree,
(To be like law of Persian and of Mede,)
That from the world aloft such men as he
Must never come here.—And just let me read
An order which I have already fram'd,
In which you'll find all the proscrib'd are nam'd.

CXXXIII.

" 'Be it ordain'd, and number'd with the laws
Observ'd among us, that the court do ne'er
Take cognizance at all of any cause
Where each or any of these names appear—
To wit: Brooks, Halleck, Dana, Hillhouse, Dawes,
Irving, or he that wrote the Pioneer,
McJilton, Ingraham, Jared Sparks, and Dwight,
Arthur—and put the ********** to flight.

CXXXIV.

" 'Turn Billy Bryant forthwith out of doors,
And ditto do to Doctor Percival;
Should Sedgwick pay a visit to our shores,
Or Leslie, never notice them at all;
For o'er their works no reader ever snores,
Nor doth old Morpheus wait upon their call;
So these, and many more of this same tribe,
The court do here eternally proscribe.

CXXXV.

" 'And now to business, for that fellow 's stood
Long waiting there with his drag-net and hook;
What have you caught, sir?' 'Why, from Lethe's mud
I've manag'd somehow to fish up this book,
Which tells of folks that liv'd before the flood.
I am th' Antediluvian, who once took
The trouble to compose a ponderous libel
Upon the rev'rend patriarchs of the Bible.'

CXXXVI.

"He read one line—old Bavius gave a yawn—
Another—and he straight began to snore—
A third—and fast to sleep the court had gone—
A fourth—each man lay prostrate on the floor—
Yet still the stubborn bard kept reading on
Until he 'd drawl'd a dozen verses o'er,
When to his breast he dropp'd his drowsy head,
And also on the floor did make his bed.

CXXXVII.

"Now at the first I clapp'd my hands right o'er
My ears, and so escap'd the fatal sound,
For I had felt th' effects of verse before;
But when I cast my anxious eyes around,
And saw that now the danger was no more,
The bard himself being wrapp'd in sleep profound,
I took them off again, and the loud snoring
Was like the noise of many torrents roaring.

CXXXVIII.

"While, thunder-struck I gaz'd upon the sight,
Thinking, poor souls! they 'd never wake again,
Nor yet would find in slumber much delight,
For each groan'd heavily, as though in pain,—
While thus I gaz'd with horror and affright,
There came into the hall a pompous train
Of three strange females and two martial men,
Each strutting like a cock beside his hen.

CXXXIX.

"The men were captains, and they all were fools,
Who from old England's isle had wander'd here;
Each one of them had brought his writing tools,
With which he libel'd all things far and near;—
They gaz'd upon the sleepers 'neath the stools
And benches, and exclaim'd, with scornful sneer,
'Yankees, by Jove!' And then, as quick as thought,
Each one his pencil and portfolio sought.

CXL.

"One famous captain straight produc'd his Diary,
(While every woman drew forth a big journal,)
And 'gan to scribble with hot haste, and fiery,
Remarks as bitter as a peach-stone's kernel.
He laid his volume on a stool, nor higher he
Than three lines penn'd, when chance did overturn all;
It gave a luckless slip, and fell like lead,
And hit the hapless poet on the head.

CXLI.

"The bard sprung up, and yell'd out, 'Murder! death!'
Old Bavius woke, as with the nightmare screaming,
Gasping most horribly, and out of breath. [ing;
Blackmore cried, 'Help!' and Dennis rose blasphem-
Flecknoe moan'd piteously his chair beneath,
And Mævius swore (his eyes with fury gleaming)
He 'd be aveng'd upon that cursed bard
Who made the incubus press him so hard.

CXLII.

"'Forbear!' cried Bavius: 'let him not be hurt!
Upon your lives let no mischance befall
This bard:—yet, lest he interrupt the court
Again, conduct him forthwith from the hall;
But treat him kindly, for this man shall sport
The largest ears and longest tail of all;
For, by this drowsy tome of monstrous size,
No fitter man e'er enter'd Paradise.'

CXLIII.

"The bard dismiss'd, the court took up the case
Of the new-comers, and to them propounded
These queries, namely, why they look'd for grace
And favour there, and on what grounds were founded
Their rights t' admission in that happy place.
At which one of the valiant captains bounded,
Like nimble monkey, into a tall chair,
To lay it off with a rhetoric air.

CXLIV.

"He wish'd to read—the judges didn't relish
The thoughts of sleeping more, so did refuse;
He said he 'd penn'd lies (like 'forgotten Mellish')
On folks who knew not how to blacken shoes,
And had a practice, absolutely hellish,
Call'd gouging, too; for, when he once did choose
To lady passengers to be uncivil,
Being set ashore, they goug'd him like the devil.

CXLV.

" 'Ay! goug'd! and for the sake of these same creatures
Who, when a Trollope visited their nation,
(Exclaim'd a *she* with dark and sullen features,)
Did think her company a degradation.
I penn'd a book of fables (that even beat yours,
Good Captain Booby), and in my narration
Belied the natives to my heart's content,
Which work I as my passport here present.'

CXLVI.

" She ceas'd, and frown'd most horribly. And then
Another straight began to use her tongue,—
(She seem'd to have more favour with the men,
Because she was quite pretty and quite young;)
She said unto the learned judges, when
She had some 'witching glances on them flung,
'Just let me read this work which I exhibit,
And show your honours how I there do fib it.'

CXLVII.

" 'No reading, if you please, my gentle madam,
But give us verbal samples of your claims
T' admission, if you have or ever had 'em.
'Well, then,' said she, 'my lib'ling budget blames,
'Mongst other things, these Yankee sons of Adam,
Because their loathsome nastiness even shames
The swinish race, all put unto the blush
By their promiscuous use of the tooth-brush.

CXLVIII.

" 'So not to throw my pearls before such swine,
Who know not how their teeth and nails to clean,
I took good care that in this book of mine
Nor sense nor decency should e'er be seen,
But that, to suit their tastes, each vulgar line
Should bring to light allusions low and mean,
And then the bastard thing, that I call'd humour,
Did limp as though disabled by a tumor.'

CXLIX.

" 'Enough, sweet Fanny!—And now who are you
That, with huge ear trumpet, stands list'ning thus?
Not like fair Fanny, pleasing to the view,
But old and wrinkled.'—'Sir, we won't discuss
That matter now—although you surely do
Know that 'the toad, ugly and venomous,
Hath yet a precious jewel in his head,'—
Or you will know it when this book you've read.'

CL.

" 'Madam,' said Bavius, 'if old wither'd witches,
Like you, are pleas'd to straggle to this land,
They shan't be smuggled in in Shakespeare's breeches;
All goods like his are ever contraband
In this same place—and very painful twitches
It gives my stomach when he 's quoted,—and
I can't see why the deuce, old lass, you must
Be quoting what creates such strong disgust.

CLI.

" 'If you've no stronger claims here, you had better
Be off at once.' 'I have! I have!' 'Oh, well!
If that 's the case, please, madam, to unfetter
Your tongue,' said Bavius, 'and unto us tell
If you e'er made a single dunce your debtor
By giving him a sip from Dullness' well;
No one gets in unless his brainless skull
Hath given birth to something very dull.'

CLII.

" She thrust her hand into her reticule,
Pull'd forth a book, and was about to read.—
'Forbear! upon your life! Why, you old fool!'
Said Bavius, 'will you stubbornly proceed
In flat defiance of our recent rule,
By which it was most solemnly decreed
That from thenceforth the court would have no reading,
But business should be done by oral pleading?'

CLIII.

" 'Well, sir,' said she, with look extremely crabbed,
'From these two volumes I was going to show,
Just at the moment when so very rabid
You and your brethren all saw fit to grow,
And, putting in your rude and senseless gab, did
Me, as it were, from off my balance throw,—
I just was going to show what reformation
Is needed in that blackguard Yankee nation;

CLIV.

" ' For those poor negroes (whom the king of Britain
Had brought from Afric o'er the ocean wave,
That slavery, like an incubus, might sit on
His colonies) the Yankees still enslave,—
So, please your honours, I two tomes have written,
To prove, by a dull train of reasoning grave,
That they should set them free, with a permit
To cut their children's throats when they see fit.

CLV.

" ' Not Neptune's mighty ocean had been ample
Enough to cool my zeal if I 'd been young,
For of philanthropy I 'd given a sample
While I did dwell those cruel men among,—
And who may know but that my bright example
Had some compassion from their bosoms wrung?—
I say, if young, I would have op'd a house,
And ta'en a good big nigger for a spouse.'

CLVI.

" ' Enough! good madam—you may onward pass.—
And say, sir, who are you?' The man, replying
He was a warrior of the naval class,
Said he shot with the long-bow, and in lying
(A thing wherein none could him e'er surpass)
His flag ne'er struck while any man's was flying,
That lately he had turn'd a famous traveller,
And of the following facts was the unraveller:

CLVII.

" How Yankee lads in cunning are so far gone,
That each the muzzle to his dog's tail tacks;
How Yankee girls have, riding in a car, gone
To swopping clothes from off their very backs;
How Yankee farmers whittle out a bargain;—
From these and other philosophic facts
He threw new light on Yankee institutions,
And show'd th' effects of written constitutions.

CLVIII.

" ' Enough! enough! concerning that same journey
And famous Diary—'t was a happy hit.
And now upon yourself, good captain, turn a
Slight glance, and tell me, if you so think fit,
If, when you drew the character of Kearney,
You did not mean to represent by it
The man you've known the longest and the best—
Your worthy self?' Said he, ' You've truly guess'd.'

CLIX.

" Cried Bavius, ' Ho! fellows, a big drum get,
And set it down there on the floor below,
That each one of these boobies here may thump it;
And he who thumps the loudest shall—but, no!
I had forgotten!—it should be a trumpet,
Massive and large, that who through it can blow
The longest, strongest hurricane of lies,
May have the highest seat in Paradise.'

CLX.

" ' For God's sake!' cried old Blackmore, ' let them not
If they must blow, blow here, or it may be
A mortal blow to us!' ' Ay! I forgot—
Just turn them out the room, or else may we
The lock-jaw get;—the doctor knows what 's what!
And, in the name of wonders! who is he
That yonder comes with stately bosom swelling,
And wagging tongue, like clapper a church-bell in?'

CLXI.

" He told them that he was the drowsiest orator
A certain earthly Congress ever saw,
When with inflated speeches he did bore it, (for
He strove, like Sampson, with an ass's jaw,
And thought to sweep his enemies before it far,)
Making the fools cry, Hear! the wise men, Pshaw!
From the far west to Congress he was sent on—
Some call'd him Humbug, and some called him B-t-n.

CLXII.

" In all his speeches 't was his highest boast
That he had never us'd rhetoric figure,
But turn'd them out into the world almost
As bare and naked as a shirtless ' nigger'
Whom southern suns in cotton fields do roast.
He lov'd gold dearly, even when no bigger
Than half a man, and had a certain failing
Which sometimes set his enemies to railing.

CLXIII.

"He once begat an offspring, and the same
Call'd Golden Humbug, and he lov'd it dear,
For it bid very fair, when it became
A little older, to create some stir,
And, like a mighty conqueror, with its name
Spread awe and consternation far and near,
For, in its swaddling clothes, it through the nation
Caus'd panic, misery, curses, desolation.

CLXIV.

"'Now be assur'd,' said Bavius, 'that you have
For a long time been known and heard of here,—
So execute the order that I gave
You fellows some time since, that he may e'er
Upon the air two drowsy pinions wave,
And thus a living humbug shall appear
Unto all men, as heavily he flies
Right through the op'ning gates of Paradise.'

CLXV.

"'T was quickly done. The statesman's hands and feet,
As if by magic, to great bug's claws grew;
And, with two monstrous wings, he 'gan to beat
The burden'd air, and heavily he flew,
A mammoth beetle, from the judgment-seat,
And sail'd, with dignity, the court-room through,
Emitting from his wings a drowsy humming,
To let the people know that sleep was coming.

CLXVI.

" They all declar'd his pinions gave a sound
Such as his voice had always done before,
And with the self-same influence did abound,—
With a great buzz he vanish'd through the door.
Old Bavius blandly smil'd; then, turning round,
Was startled by a strange and wild uproar,
The cause of which I will, if e'er I can, sir,
Explain to you in the ensuing stanza.

CLXVII.

" Well, it appears that the old faithful Charon
Had brought a load of critics in his boat,
And every mother's son of them, with care, on
His shoulders did into the court-room *toat*,
Though at the risk of every bit of hair on
His grey head, which their fingers did devote
To ruin, and did fiercely set to tearing,
Kicking most furiously the while, and swearing.

CLXVIII.

" It was their habit, and they could not help
From doing now what they had done so long.
Old Dennis, when he heard them hiss and yelp,
And screech so hideously the crowd among,
Rememb'ring that he 'd been himself a whelp,
When on the earth, of that same critic throng,
Was from that fact fill'd with the full conviction
That they came under his own jurisdiction.

CLXIX.

" One of them was a North American Savage,
Another one they did the Knickerbocker call,
With several others, who did sometimes ravage
The fields of literature, and fiercely maul
Each luckless wight who (when they chanc'd to have rage
And bitterness stirr'd up within their gall,
Making them mad, like dogs in August's sun)
Just like a fool within their reach did run.

CLXX.

" These were the men ' who first for poets past,'
(As is so finely and so truly said by Pope,)
' Turn'd critics next, and prov'd plain fools at last.'
And when, poor souls ! their Muses did elope,
After first standing some few hours aghast,
Each settled down into a misanthrope,
And took to snapping, snarling, howling, hissing,
Like folks whose wives have other men been kissing.

CLXXI.

" They kept the narrow toll-gate to Parnassus,—
For 't is most shrewdly said by that queer fellow,
So fam'd for his ill luck among the lasses,
The far-renown'd and quaint old Samuel Weller,
That, in the world, when unto luckless asses
Some bitter portion of mishap hath fell e'er,
They straightway vent the venom of their souls
By keeping gates and making folks pay tolls.

CLXXII.

"So did they act precisely on this principle,—
And now, to give their spite and anger play,
Cuff'd Charon, but were not to make him wince able—
He coolly brought them in, and went away.—
And Dennis scrutinized, and found invincible
The pile of evidence they did display,
When from some hidden reason he did choose
To turn each man of them into a goose.

CLXXIII.

"Maybe it was because geese hiss and cackle,
(Which is almost the only thing they do,)
As do these critics o'er each bard they hackle
And tear to pieces in a fierce review;
Besides, a goose with quills doth clothe his back well,
And so doth each of these pen-wasters too;
And then a goose is a confounded dunce,
And here you see the parallel at once.

CLXXIV.

"I can't describe to you how these same creatures
Forthwith began to hiss, and squawk, and squall,
And then display their very vicious natures
By a promiscuous attack on all,
Thrusting their beaks into a fellow's features,
While with their wings they did his person maul,—
Nibbling at fingers, thumbs, and feet, and toes,
And one flew up and bit at Bavius' nose.

CLXXV.

" ' Oh, Lord ! turn these most devilish creatures out,'
Said he to Dennis, ' or, as I'm a sinner,
With ruthless beaks they'll nibble off each snout,
And on our thumbs and fingers make a dinner !'
Old Dennis did the furious ganders rout
And banish—but it scarce grew calm within ere
Blackmore exclaim'd, ' There 's Flecknoe, by St. Luke ! in
The corner yonder, deadly pale, and puking !'

CLXXVI.

" ' Run, Doctor Blackmore, run ! and bring your physic,
Exclaim'd the frighten'd judges in a breath.
' He heaves and gasps as though he had the phthysic !
His lips are blue ! his cheeks are pale as death !
And, as when one with the dread cholera is sick,
His stomach shows rebellion foul beneath !
Oh, bring your nostrums out ! for, if not soon
Reliev'd, we fear McFlecknoe 's a *gone coon*.'

CLXXVII.

" Blackmore, in haste, drew forth a powerful potion,
Which down his throat the sick McFlecknoe took,
And truly you can have no kind of notion
How very soon it made him better look.
When he recover'd somewhat, with emotion
He from beneath his coat produc'd a book,
And threw it furiously upon the floor,
And stamp'd upon it, and most loudly swore.

CLXXVIII.

" ' For shame !' cried Blackmore ; ' why, it is below
The dignity of your official station
To rave and curse so fiercely, and bestow
On a poor book such treatment, and'—' Darnation !'
Cried he, ' just hold your tongue, and let me go !
And I will trounce that fellow, like the nation,
Who had the insolence to put this book in
My hands—he knew 't would set me soon to puking !'

CLXXIX.

" ' What book ? What fellow ?' ' Why, the Parricide ;
The man who wrote Misserrimus, and some more
(For aught I know) such sick'ning works beside.
As soon as Charon set him in the door,
He came and drew me to yon nook aside,
And in a flatt'ring manner laid before
My gaze a pile of volumes, wishing me
Th' exclusive judge of his own cause to be.

CLXXX.

" ' While you were dealing with the ganders, I
Was safely perch'd up in a high recess,
And there forthwith began to run my eye
Over each leaf of printed loathsomeness,
Which I wish none, except an enemy,
May ever have the ill luck to possess.
I read some pages, and then felt my breast
And stomach heaving, and—you know the rest.'

CLXXXI.

"Said Bavius, 'Come, good brother, don't be wroth!
To read the book was surely most unwise;
So rather blame yourself, nor deal out oath
And cruel wish against the author's eyes;
His works are very dull, and I am loth
To turn the fellow out of Paradise.'
Said he, 'Let me reward him, then, I pray.'
Quoth Bavius, 'If you must, sir—why, you may.'

CLXXXII.

"The invalid then turn'd to Dennis, and
Exclaim'd, 'Good brother, will you kindly do
Me a small favour? and it will command
My lasting gratitude; for I did view,
Not along ago, your wondrous sleight of hand,
And am convinc'd there 's no one here as you
So handily can fubricate a fowl—
So turn this gloomy fellow to an owl.'

CLXXXIII.

"'T was done. The owl look'd grave, perch'd up each ear,
And op'd his mouth and cried, 'Tu-whit! tu-whoo!'
Then, spreading out his dusky wings, did steer
Right to the door, and through it swiftly flew;
And, as he vanish'd, there did then appear,
Within the other door, a comer new,
Whose face peer'd out, like visage of a monkey,
From 'neath a load he carried like a donkey.

CLXXXIV.

"He bore his monstrous burden in, and laid
It gently down, and then began to puff—
'T was thus he always did on earth, 't is said,
When he would bring to notice this same stuff,
Well knowing that, unless he lent his aid
Unto his offspring, they 'd fare bad enough.
Old Bavius star'd, and ask'd him from what road
H e'd come, and why he bore so huge a load.

CLXXXV.

"Then, even as Balaam's beast, when he was seiz'd
Upon the road with a rhetoric fever,
As he perceived his honest carcass squeez'd
By one who had just turn'd a foul deceiver
To his own kin and nation, and was pleas'd
To curse them fiercely, for the unbeliever
Spake out and ask'd him what he meant,—
So spake this ass, as grave and eloquent.

CLXXXVI.

"He told the court his name was Jonathan,
The brother of Parrhassius, a sweet bard,
For foolish ditties fam'd;—and that they twain
Were welded to each other fast and hard;
That he 'd come on before, to make as plain
As possible their right to a reward,—
While th' other stopp'd to finish a dull poem,
Which sometimes caus'd his Pegasus to throw him.

CLXXXVII.

" As for himself, he 'd lent his aid t' encumber
Some twenty magazines with sundry trash
In prose and verse, and help to write a number
Of them both out of credit and of cash,—
And afterwards he gather'd all his lumber
Together, and ev'n found a man full rash
Enough to take with him a part and lot in
The book, and publish it to be forgotten.

CLXXXVIII.

" Each dog hath had his day, but this same tome
In truth can scarce be said t' have had its minute ;
Oh no, they never mention'd it—save some
Who 'd lost a few unlucky pennies in it.
'Its name was never heard,' and all were dumb
About its merits, and no puff could win it
The slightest praise or even observation—
Which surely here 's its highest commendation.

CLXXXIX.

" ' I turn'd it off (as writers of this sort
E'er do who fill with saleless trash some shelf)
By stating that 't was publish'd, not to court
The public favour, but to please myself.
Each purchaser exclaim'd, ' It may be sport
For you, old fellow ; but why take our pelf
By printing volumes which, 't was understood,
All men might buy, and read, as being good ?'

CXC.

" ' But on these and my other early feats
'Tis not my present purpose long to dwell,
For this, my final effort, fairly beats
Them all outright.—But will your honours tell
Me if you've ever seen my mammoth sheets,
Which in our sacred cause cut such a swell?
See here!' At that he spread upon the floor
A monstrous paper measuring ten feet o'er.

CXCI.

"The court held up their hands and op'd their eyes,
And Blackmore said, ' Didst ever see the beat!'
' 'Tis nothing! nothing! In that pack,' he cries,
' I have a thousand more just like that sheet,
Each one of which should gain me Paradise—
Not that with dullness they are all replete,
(Though mostly full of trash;) but that they have
Brought native genius almost to the grave.

CXCII.

" ' For, though our mammoth here doth freely swallow
Whole lots of foreign book-trash down his throat,
And pours them forth, that multitudes may wallow
In all the stuff that English dunce e'er wrote,
Yet from these facts th' inference doth not follow
That he'll take what ne'er o'er the waves did float,—
He scorns all such, except it be some strain'
(I started here) 'just like the ' Lady Jane.'

CXCIII.

" 'For I would have the Yankee folks to know
(And make them thus to foreign coxcombs yield
The paths of learning) that, though long ago
Their Henry did the mighty thunders wield
Of eloquence, as Webster now,—and though
They ever beat the British in the field
And ocean, and knew how, at Bunker Hill,
To use their arms, they ne'er can use the quill.'

CXCIV.

" Said Bavius, 'I do think that this same chap
Has done as much to further dullness' cause
As any man that ever had the hap
Around a grey goose-quill to throw his claws.—
So twist his big sheet into a fools-cap,
With strings to tie it underneath his jaws.—
And now to Paradise just bear your pack, as
A German pedlar or a Spanish jack-ass.'

CXCV.

" 'Nay! sir; first let me tell you, ere I go,
About Parrhassius, my brother dear,
Who will, I fancy, shortly come below,
If to an end he 's brought his poem near;—
But Pegasus kick'd up not long ago,
And toss'd him in the mud, and much I fear
The luckless bard may ne'er get out again,
And so the world may lose the 'Lady Jane.'

CXCVI.

" ' He is a bard deservedly popular
(As he himself, as editor, doth state here)
At home and in the British world afar;
Although not an original creator
Of what he hawks about as his own ware,
But only an assiduous imitator,
With his own servile and slow-moving pen,
Of what is written by some other men.

CXCVII.

" ' For, like the famous bull-frog in the fable,
(That swell'd himself until he burst his hide,
Trying if he to match the ox were able,)
He squats himself some greater bard beside,
Just like a tea-pot sitting by a Babel,
And puffs and blows his belly out, and side,
With empty breath, to swell his puny size
Until he thinks he with his betters vies.

CXCVIII.

" ' No man can write a poem but he'll seek
T' imitate, and do just as th' other did in
His verses, till he finds his pinions weak,
And that his fancy, feeble and bed-ridden,
Won't bear him to Parnassus' lofty peak,
Nor will the Muses always come when bidden
By each pert poetaster who 'd intrude
Profanely on their sacred solitude.

CXCIX.

" ' But, though the Muses scorn him, yet the misses,
Who in the ball-rooms giggle, blush, and dance,
And pout their little lips, as if for kisses,
Oft give unto his lines a fav'ring glance,
And cry, ' *Oh, what a pretty poem this is!*'
For in cotillions he can neatly prance,
And with his bows hath gain'd him popularity,
Which else would truly be to him a rarity.

CC.

" ' And now in his own journal he is praising
Himself prodigiously in heathen style,
Like Horace, when he fancied that his days in
The earth were ending, and his mortal toil,
And boasted that he felt pen-feathers raising
Upon his legs, and that, ere a great while,
On a cygnet's wings he 'd from the earth cut loose—
But then I think my brother 'll prove a goose.

CCI.

" ' And now, you see, I've shown he is about
As big a dunce as any you have here,
And most unquestionably have made out
His right and title to admission clear;
But, that there be no shadow of a doubt,
Here 's ' Lady Jane.' ' When once more I did hear
That name, my anger I could not contain,
But cried out, ' Devil take the Lady Jane!'

CCII.

"Oh that I had not been so rash—profane!
A cry of horror burst from every lip!
'Who 's that? Who speaks thus of the Lady Jane?
Accursed wretch! begone! Ho! fellows, ship
Him off, nor let him e'er come back again!
For if you do, blasphemous imp! we'll dip
Your head and ears into old Lethe's pools!—
What brought you to the Paradise of Fools?

CCIII.

"'Didst speak ill of the Lady Jane?—Begone!
Vanish! and let us see you here no more!'
Right by the ears I through the room was drawn,
And, with a kick, sent headlong from the door;
I fell—arose—the sprite who 'd brought me on
The comet's back unto this place before,
As I got up, was standing by my side—
He frown'd upon me, and began to chide.

CCIV.

"'A pretty pass you've brought yourself unto,
By making such a most confounded fuss
About that poem, which the judges do,
Within this place, consider the *ne plus*
Ultra of dullness, and of folly too!
I fear that now the jig is up with us
In every court here. But we'll try—so come!'
I follow'd, conscience-stricken, sad, and dumb.

CCV.

" He led me elsewhere.—But I think I 'd better
(For there 's a cursed soreness in my throat)
Defer th' account until I write the letter
In which I mean to send you back the note
For which, you recollect, I stand your debtor.—
They said I'd have to read what W-ll-s wrote,
And B-nt-n spoke, before I would be fit
Within the Paradise of Fools to sit.

CCVI.

" And so they sent me back, upon the comet,
To earth, to study well the ' Lady Jane,'
And learn to be a perfect ninny from it.—
I for my carcass hunted long in vain ;
At last I found that, brought unto your home, it
You had within your chamber closet lain ;
The body's mouth was open, and the soul
Crept, like a little mouse, into its hole.

CCVII.

" And there it nestled.—But the master-wheel,
Which moves the whole machinery of life,
Would'nt stir an inch.—No language can reveal
With what strange horrors my poor soul was rife
As it sat shivering there, and thought to feel,
Each moment, your cold, keen, dissecting knife
Tearing each joint and ligament in twain,
And forcing it from house and home again.

CCVIII.

"But oh! 't was joyous! when I saw you come
(As through the windows of my eyes I star'd
Most anxiously) with a nice cup of rum,
And not, with horrid knife and elbows bar'd,
To rip me up. And, when you gave me some,
It really seem'd as if all was repair'd
Within my body, which did then revive
And, sitting up, began to feel alive.

CCIX.

"You know the rest—as how I scar'd you so."—
"Tush!" said the doctor. "Beelzebub, I fear
You've lied confoundedly, for I do know
That these same authors, that you 'd have appear
T' have gone into your Paradise below,
Are even now, as ever, scribbling here
Upon the earth most furiously. So can
You just explain this contradiction, man?"

CCX.

Quoth Bubble, "I'm your subject, and, beside,
Am under sundry obligations, or,
Good doctor, when you told me that I lied,
By Jupiter! I 'd slapp'd you on the jaw;
But, as it is, I'll lay offence aside,
And, keeping from your chaps my angry paw,
Will tell you what they told me as I rode
Upon the comet unto your abode.

CCXI.

" They said that Bavius, list'ning to a tune
Which several little planets 'gan to play,
Was seated on the tip end of the moon,
And with his spy-glass saw on earth that day
Such a great shoal of fools as (if they soon
Should wander off to Paradise away)
Would give the judges far more work to do
Than for a long time they could e'er get through.

CCXII.

" And so he hasten'd home with all his might,
And call'd the court together, and then told
Them that they 'd be in a most awkward plight
When all these waves of folly on them roll'd,
Unless indeed some very knowing wight
Amongst them could a remedy unfold.
Each learned judge began to scratch his head,
And Mævius op'd his mouth and spake, and said,—

CCXIII.

" ' Bavius, it is no use to scratch your pate to
Find out a clever and convenient plan.
Call up and judge th' Idolon, or (as Plato
Hath it, I think) the idea of each man,
In his own stead, since he is not in state to
Be judg'd himself.' Assenting murmurs ran
Throughout the room, and each one clapp'd his paws,
And by that sign betoken'd his applause.

CCXIV.

"'What are ideas?' said I. 'Why, images,
Or antenatal types of things that be;
A kind of models—and for each of these
There is a living, breathing man, you see,
Walking the earth or sailing on the seas.
These ideas do exist eternally,
And do ideally whate'er is done
In substance by the bodies—every one.'

CCXV.

"But one thing I almost forgot to mention,
(And beg your pardon, ye blue-stocking fair;)
Which is that, in the whole of my detention,
I scarcely saw an idea of you there;
To which I quickly call'd my guide's attention,—
'Oh, pshaw!' said he: 'my friend, you're dull, I swear
To pester folks upon your earthly ball
They've long been made without ideas at all.'

CCXVI.

"And now, dear doctor, as twilight is weaving
A sable shroud, in which to wrap the sun,
I think that I must bid you a good evening;
For I can now be recognized by none,—
And much I fear my aged sire is grieving,
And thinks there 's also lost to him a son;—
So thank you most sincerely for your trouble;
And now I'll go and hunt up Parson Bubble."

CCXVII.

But the physician was then fast asleep,
Or else he lied most foully in his throat,
Which loudly snor'd. So Beelzebub did creep
Close up, and help'd himself to a bank-note
The doctor in his pocket-book did keep;
And from the closet took his best new coat;
Then bow'd politely, as he clos'd the door—
Went out—and all the world was spread before.

CCXVIII.

And so good-bye to Beelzebub! And now
Good-bye to you, ye gentle authors all!
Perhaps some of you'll show a frowning brow,
And glare upon my Muse with fierce eye-ball,
And call her termagant, and vengeance vow,
Swearing she 's fill'd my ink-horn up with gall;—
But come! don't kick too fiercely at this strain!
For I've the lash prepar'd for use again.

CCXIX.

And ye, sweet savage critics! (those I mean
Who each in nature is so like a spider,
That he can only grow big by his spleen,
And swell to notice when he turns derider;)
Just let my Muse alone! for if 'tis seen
That you have e'er maliciously belied her,
By foully stating what is most untrue,
By Jupiter! I'll lay the lash on you!

CCXX.

And if you think to kill with a critique
  The bird whose wings were never tried before,
Or ev'n to maim and cripple him do seek,
  Perhaps you'll find you're of your game not sure,
And that you've caught a live hawk by the beak;—
  For, gentlemen, I'll pay you off the score,
And say, in Shakespeare's words, "*Lay on, Mac Duff!*
And d—d be he who first cries, Hold! enough!"

NOTES.

The low and vulgar style in which it is written, &c.
Critique, p. 8.

Old Simon Snappingturtle (may the foul fiend fly away with him for his snappishness,) is not the only one who has a distaste for every thing common or unclean in composition. We see that a certain fastidious-exquisite, of a certain paper, in a certain city, not a thousand miles from the place where this was penned, denounces Mr. Wilmer's new Satire as low and vulgar in style and sentiment. We opine that the worthy critic will pronounce us a very low fellow, when he finds that we have furnished him with sundry ornaments, which would probably but little inhance his appearance in a ball-room. In order to avert the storm of wrath impending over our unlucky head, we beg leave to state that, when we first took up the pen to deal with his long-eared worthiness, we fully intended to praise and not to censure, but that, having dashed off a few laudatory stanzas, we were reading them to a certain wickedly-witty friend, when he exclaimed in a pathetic tone, and with a mischievous twinkle of the eye—

> "Ah! who in lofty numbers can surpass
> The bard who soars to eulogize an ass?"

which put us so out of conceit with our lines, that we threw them in the fire and

> "Smear'd the page with gall instead of honey;"

but as the offence, like manslaughter, was committed in the heat of passion, we think that the punishment should be lighter on that account.

But notwithstanding that the "Paradise of Fools" is all "low stuff," I, Nathan Nobody, do most positively insist upon it that I am not a low fellow, but a gentleman. True it is that I do not, by dint of

cheating my tailor, wear the best of coats. True it is that I do not gird up my loins with corsets, and curl my "whiskers fine." True it is that my bow is any thing but graceful; that I have never been ambitious of making my tongue the organ of "agreeable nonsense," (proh Jupiter!) and my mouth a perennial fountain of folly; that I disdain to emulate the glorious achievements of a monkey, and have never condescended to caper and frisk, with puggish activity and ease, around the narrow limits of a ball-room, looking upon dancing as a relic of the customs of barbarous times, and as much to be despised, in the present enlightened age, as the worshipping of the beetle, or any other heathenish practice. I say, notwithstanding all these alarming truths, I plead not guilty to the charge of being a low fellow. For, verily I say unto you, my father owned a domain of some twelve or fifteen hundred acres of rich landed property, with a house big enough to accommodate a legion; and if that does not make me a gentleman I don't know what will, unless it be that my mother has now, at this very moment, locked up in her old dusty bureau, a pedigree of all the Nobodies, from (I believe) the days of Shem, Ham, and Japhet—down to the present time, which said pedigree was not only ennobled by crossing the Atlantic, but furthermore containeth the names of Captains, and Corporals, and Commodores, and actually of one whole live English Baronet—which Baronet aforesaid may be a booby or a scoundrel for ought I know to the contrary, but it nevertheless is a Baronet, lying and being somewhere in the kingdom of the prolific Mrs. Coburg, Queen of Great Britain, and Ireland, (and France, I believe,) and Defender of the Faith.

I am therefore a gentleman, both by descent and purchase, and yet I am excessively fond of "low stuff," such as was written by Fielding, and Smollet, and Shakespeare, and Burns, and most heartily despise the imbecile refinements and insipid inanities of this generation of vipers. And I do most firmly believe that, if the present taste continues to progress, the silly hankering after fashionable Novels, Poems, &c. &c., and the contemptible outcry against what is termed, by whiskered nothings and romantic maidens, "low stuff," that is against correct delineations of human nature as it really is, will con-

sign Homer, and Chaucer, and Shakespeare, and Fielding, and Dryden, and Pope, and Burns, and a whole host of geniuses to the tomb of the Capulets, and place Willis, Morris & Co. upon the highest peak of Parnassus. Dii avertite!

Puffed it himself, &c.—*Stanza* xxxiii.

I read, in one of the columns of the "Brother Jonathan," the title of a poem called the "Lady Jane," by N. P. Willis; I then looked at the top of the paper for the editor's name, and lo! it was N. P. Willis; I then turned over, and under the head of editorial miscellanies, read a "puff grandiloquent" upon the "Lady Jane," wherein, amongst other wonderful news, I found the startling annunciation that the aforesaid N. P. Willis is "one of the most deservedly popular writers in either hemisphere." I say startling; for, if true, it virtually proclaimed the downfall of literature.

"Heaven help the rest!
What must *they* be when Willis is the best."

The glory of my brazen face, &c.—*Stanza* cxi.

This bard has a sufficiency of brass to make a cauldron big enough to roast all the geese that ever cackled with delight over his inane productions. The unheard of impudence, of placing his own portrait amongst those of the *other distinguished men* of the day, was only equalled by his lately announcing himself as the *pioneer* of American literature, boldly asseverating that he alone made the periodical-press of the country what it is at present. One might readily imagine that it was the doings of some such coxcomb. None other could have introduced a style of writing that threatens the final destruction of the English language;—a style in which some insignificant idea is buried in a mountain of words; which said mountain, after laboring tremendously, always manages to bring forth a mouse;—a style which somewhat resembles that of a certain fastidious wight, whom we lately heard disdaining the homely language of his forefathers, and

expressing what the butchers would call the good *condition* of another, by the following elegant circumlocution; "the spiritual nature of that beautiful damsel is enshrined in a large quantity of corporeal matter," meaning, I suppose, that the girl was fat.

[L. of C.

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